

North Fork Upper North Bosque (1255B) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on the North Fork Upper North Bosque (1255B) in the summer of 2009 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. North Fork Upper North Bosque is an unclassified intermittent water body in north central Texas, approximately 18 miles in length. It is currently listed on the 2014 Texas Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies due to elevated bacteria levels. It was initially listed in 2002.

The RUAA identified that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for the North Fork Upper North Bosque should be revised to secondary contact recreation 2 (SCR 2). SCR applies to water bodies where water recreation can occur, but the nature of the recreation does not involve a significant risk of ingestion. SCR 2 applies to water bodies where water recreation activities do not involve a significant risk of ingestion and where activities occur less frequently than for secondary contact recreation 1 due to physical characteristics of the water body or limited public access.

During the field surveys, field staff did not observe any PCR occurring on the stream, nor did they find any evidence of PCR. Interviews of individuals familiar with the stream did not report using the stream for recreation and stated physical characteristics as the reason. Six of the eight individuals interviewed, seven of them landowners, described the stream as ephemeral. A biologist familiar with the stream stated that since 1996 the stream only flows after storm events and is dry most of the time. Physical characteristics of the stream include an average thalweg of 0.12 meters (4.72 in), no pools greater than one meter deep, and no measurable flow. Public access is very limited. There are eight road crossings and the stream flows predominately through private lands.

Naturally low water levels and limited accessibility decrease the likelihood of PCR use. The North Fork Upper North Bosque is extremely shallow and has little public access, supporting reclassification to SCR 2. In accordance with §307.4 (j)(3)(C) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ recommends a reclassification from PCR to SCR 2 with the corresponding geometric mean of 1030 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of the North Fork Upper North Bosque, from the confluence with the South Fork of the Upper North Bosque River in Stephenville, upstream to the headwaters, 2.0 miles north of FM 219, excluding reservoirs UB1 and UB2. This reclassification is appropriate due to “natural, ephemeral, intermittent low flow conditions or water levels” in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(2).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of the North Fork Upper North Bosque in the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ would provide additional public notice and opportunity for public comment. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would review this proposed change under the provisions of the federal Clean Water Act.